

MAY -8 2000

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April 28, 2000

Dr. Joseph Lederberg, Head
Laboratory of Molecular Genetics
Rockefeller University
York Avenue and East 66th
New York, New York 10021

Dear Dr. Lederberg:

This week I read your article "Infectious History" in the series for Science "Pathways of Discovery." It is splendid and I wish to thank you for this interesting historical review.

Thank you

However, I regret you did not mention Frau Hesse. It has always seemed to me that her suggestion to Koch through her husband a laboratory assistant to Koch, of using agar-agar as a gelling agent was of prime importance to the development of microbiology. Surely it could never evolved so successfully relying on broth and gelatin. Frau Hesse's agar-agar was as much a discovery as any because it worked, just as Jenner's cow-pox vaccine and many other discoveries. They worked.

Sincerely yours,

Gladys E. Baker

Professor Emeritus, University of
Hawai'i, Mycology
Fellow AAAS

*Of course we are all deeply indebted to the miraculous
powers of agar and to Frau Hesse for introducing them to micro-
biology. Do you know of any extensive historical account thereof?*

Sincerely,

John Lederberg.

*4/28/00
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